

Message Text

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ACTION EB-11

INFO OCT-01 NEA-10 ISO-00 CAB-09 CIAE-00 COME-00 DODE-00

DOT-00 INR-10 NSAE-00 RSC-01 FAA-00 INT-08 FEA-02

DRC-01 L-03 SS-20 NSC-07 PRS-01 /084 W

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P R 101120Z APR 74

FM AMCONSUL BOMBAY

TO SECSTATE WASHDC PRIORITY 4374

INFO AMEMBASSY NEW DELHI PRIORITY

AMCONSUL CALCUTTA

AMCONSUL MADRAS

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E.O. 11652 N/A

TAGS: ETRN IN

SUBJECT: CIVAIR JET FUEL

REF: NEW DELHI 4808

1. GINDRAUX CALLED ON US TODAY TO FILL US IN ON HIS APRIL 10 MEETING WITH K.K. UNNI, MANAGING DIRECTOR, AIR INDIA GINDRAUX HAD CALLED ON UNNI TO INFORM HIM OF TWA'S VERY SERIOUS CONCERN OVER THE PRICE OF JET FUEL IN BOMBAY AND TO ADVISE HIM THAT TWA IS CONSIDERING SUSPENSION OF SERVICES TO INDIA UNLESS THE EXCESSIVE SURCHARGE AND/OR MAHARASHTRA SALES TAXES REMOVED AND PRICES LOWERED. CONTENTS REFTEL RELAYED TO GINDRAUX AT OUTSET OUR MEETING.

2. ACCORDING GINDRAUX, UNNI CONFIRMED GENERAL CONTENT REFTEL AND SAID THAT "INTENSIVE,HIGH LEVEL MEETINGS AT MINISTERIAL" ARE PRESENTLY BEING HELD IN DELHI ON THE SUBJECT OF JET FUEL. UNNI SAID SOME ASPECTS OF THE SUBJECT WILL VERY LIKELY BE DEBATED IN LOK SABHA APRIL 10. UNNI, ACCORDING GINDRAUX IS "CAUTIOUSLY OPTIMISTIC" SOME RELIEF WILL BE FORTHCOMING ON THE PRICE OF FUEL AS THE RESULT OF PRESENT EFFORTS

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BEING MADE TO THIS END.

3. UNNI INFORMED GINDRAUX THAT RAJ BAHADUR, MINISTER TOURISM AND CIVIL AVIATION, HAS WRITTEN "STRONGLY WORDED LETTER" TO MAHARASHTRA STATE CHIEF MINISTER NAIK ON THE SUBJECT OF MAHARASHTRA SALES TAX, BUT HAD NO DETAILS OTHER THAN FACT LETTER HAD BEEN SENT. UNNI HIMSELF HAS PERSONALLY MET WITH NAIK AND HAS SUBMITTED TO CHIEF MINISTER A LETTER OF PROTEST OF THE HIGH MAHARASHTRA SALES TAX. LETTER HAS BEEN ACKNOWLEDGED, BUT NO OTHER ACTION APPEARS TO HAVE BEEN TAKEN ON IT YET. UNNI RECOMMENDS THAT FOREIGN AIRLINES SERVING BOMBAY SUBMIT A JOINT PROTEST IN WRITING TO NAIK AS SOON AS POSSIBLE (GINDRAUX STATES BOAC AND SWISSAIR PRESENTLY PREPARED SIGN SUCH A LETTER, AND HE HOPES ROUND UP MORE SUPPORT WITHIN NEXT DAY OR SO)

4. UNNI INDICATED AIR INDIA VERY CONCERNED OVER JET FUEL PRICE, POINTING OUT THAT AIR INDIA AFFECTED TO GREATER DEGREE THAN ANY OTHER AIRLINE. HE SEEMS COGNIZANT THAT RETALIATION MIGHT WELL BE TAKEN AGAINST AIR INDIA, AND APPEARED AWARE THAT TMA HAS RECOMMENDED RETALIATORY ACTION TO THE GOVERNMENT OF LEBANON. (GINDRAUX HAS HEARD HERE THAT TMA'S RECOMMENDATION TO GOVERNMENT OF LEBANON MIGHT BE IMPLEMENTED FAIRLY SHORTLY, HE HAS ALSO HEARD LOCALLY THAT SINGAPORE AIRLINES MIGHT ALSO RETALIATE, THOUGH HE SEEMED LESSSURE OF SINGAPORE AIRLINES THAT HE DID OF TMA.

5. UNNI RECOGNIZES THE SERIOUSNESS OF THE SITUATION BUT STRONGLY RECOMMENDED TO GINDRAUX THAT TWA NOT TAKE ANY PRECIPITATE ACTION UNTIL OUTCOME KNOWN OF CURRENT EFFORTS BOTH IN DELHI AND MAHARASHTRA TO BRING DOWN THE PRICE OF FUEL.

6. GINDRAUX HAS ASKED THAT RESULTS OF HIS MEETING WITH UNNI BE CONVEYED TO TWA HOME OFFICE, HE WAS PARTICULARLY ANXIOUS THAT CONTENTS PARA 5 BE MORE KNOWN TO TWA.

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